

**Standard USG-1: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the United States government—its origins and its functions.**

USG-1.5 Compare the advantages and disadvantages of the ways in which power is distributed, shared, and limited to serve the purposes of constitutional government, including the criteria of effectiveness, the prevention of the abuse of power, and responsiveness to popular will. (P)

**Taxonomy Level:** 2.6-B Understand Conceptual Knowledge

**Previous/future knowledge:**

Students will have studied historical conflicts in which governmental change took place; thereby, having some knowledge about governmental effectiveness/ineffectiveness and the idea of power. The primary examples that have been studied are the Magna Charta, Declaration of Independence, the Age of Revolutions, and the principles of the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights. (4-4.1; 4-4.3; 6-2.3; USHC 2.3; USHC 4.2)

**It is essential for students to understand** the following stated purposes of constitutional government (effectiveness, legitimate use of power, responsiveness) and to recognize that the form and function of political systems play a critical role in helping governments achieve those purposes. Students should know about power and authority and the concept of legitimacy – i.e. the “rightful” application of power by a government. The comparative nature of this indicator correlates to Standard USG-1.4 and its examination of confederate, federal, and unitary systems. Students should grasp the concept that constitutional governments often fail to realize these purposes and there is differentiation in the subsequent ability of governments to be responsive to these failures (incorporates USG-1.3).

**It is not essential for students to know** the governmental system of any particular nation even though case studies and historical examples should be utilized.

**Assessment guidelines:**

The objective of this indicator is to compare the functional distribution of power in government. Assessments should require students to identify power and how it is distributed in various systems. Students should be able to distinguish between the use of legitimate and illegitimate power. It is reasonable to require students to analyze use of power in government and to evaluate its effectiveness.